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AML 2410, Section 8974

December 9th, 2013

Sometimes we all have things that make us feel comforted. In the story “The Haunted Boy” by Carson McCullers, Hugh finds comfort in the fact that his mother is better than her past state of instability. For my creative project, I really wanted to incorporate baking in some way, mostly because everyone likes baked goods. I was flipping through the Internet; trying to find some sort of idea on how to tie symbolism into one of the stories we read when I stumbled across these cupcakes that looked like pie. At first I was like “No way, I don’t have the patience to make these!” But then I decided on how I could tie in the pie to the story “The Haunted Boy”. So I gathered my baking supplies, and started to make the cute little cupcakes. After a few hours, I began to realize just how much of a mess I had gotten myself into, for the first few cupcakes did not turn out to be what I was hoping for. The frosting was a complete mess, and it got everywhere in my kitchen, including my hair.

The reason I chose to do these cupcakes was because I thought of how Hugh acts when he first comes home from school and is in search of his mother. He is with his friend John, who Hugh is rather fond of. When the boys walk into the kitchen, Hugh offered John some pie and talks about how good of a cook his mother is. Hugh describes how she makes the piecrust out of graham crackers instead of pie dough, but also mentions that his mother is very much so capable of making regular pie dough. We can sense some obvious pride in Hugh when he talks about his mother and her baking abilities.

When I read this particular story, I noticed how Hugh was used to routinely coming home to see his mother after school. “Mamma always has me something nice for after school” (McCullers, 165). When he calls his mother’s name and finds out that she is not home, Hugh begins to panic and worry. We sense that his discomfort is from a past calamity that had left him with nothing but worrisome memories. The pie that his mother had left out for him shows that she had made something for that day, so she was around earlier. When Hugh and John eat the pie, John comments on how delicious it is. Hugh loves talking about his mother now, and how she is all-better versus how she was a year ago.

Reassurance is always a good feeling to have when you are uneasy about a situation. “And on the enameled table, there was a lemon pie that she had made. Assured by the everyday kitchen and the pie, Hugh stepped back into the hall and raised his face again to call upstairs” (McCullers, 164). Having small things to come home to, such as the presence of the pie, Hugh feels much more comfortable about his mother’s health and wellbeing when he comes home to her baked goods. Hugh was traumatized when his mother attempted suicide, and is still recovering from parts of the tragedy that left awful memories to be forever imprinted in his young, innocent mind. When Hugh’s mother made the decision to try to attempt suicide, she broke her family bond with her son and her husband. Hugh’s father has kept his distance from his son ever since the incident, and Hugh felt so alone when his mother was away receiving treatment to get better. When the mother returned home, the family bond was restored, Hugh seemed to face things with a different perspective, and had a bit of hope that helped him get through his everyday life easier. The pie symbolizes the reassurance of the improved health of his mother.

In conclusion, I chose to bake cupcakes resembling pies for my creative project. I decided this because I saw the pie that Hugh’s mother baked in “The Haunted Boy” was a good resemblance of how his mother has gotten better. Hugh’s mother’s past attempt at suicide really left Hugh in an uncomfortable state, and when she came home and was better, Hugh saw his mother in a different light. We can feel the presence of hope for a happier family since she is doing better. Although the story carried a dark and depressing connotation, the feeling of dread is slightly uplifted by the mother’s new tone and motherly acts. Hugh notices the change in his mom since she came back home, and feels a bit more comforted by her small changes around the household.